A Study on Workplace Ostracism and its Impact on Employees Performance

SHORT SYNOPSIS

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by

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Certificate

I hereby declare that the short synopsis "A study on Workplace Ostracism and its Impact on Employees Performance" being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in management under the faculty of Management Studies of Manav Rachna International Institute of Research & Studies, Faridabad during the academic year 2019-2022. It is a bonafide record of origmal work carried out under the supervision of Dr. Anindita Chatterjee Rao and has not been submitted in full or part to any other university or institute for degree or diploma. Further, it is certified that the short synopsis is plagiarism-free and the proof has been submitted.

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ABSTRACT

Workplace Ostracism means social exclusion, rejection, and psychological distress at workplace. All the organizations private or public, they are part of social systems. Employees are integral part of every organization and their behavior is unpredictable. This study aims to find out the factors of behavioral change and its impact on performance of ostracized employees.

The aim of the study is to describe the workplace ostracism and its impact on performance of employees, it will also study employees facing workplace ostracism in private institutions and MNC's.

This research would help to recognize the issues that the Ostracized employees in private institutions and MNC's face in the organizations. The study would help to understand ostracism at workplace and to find out practices to create a healthy organization culture and a progressive work environment.

Keywords: Ostracism, Rejection, Social Exclusion, Employee Performance, Employee Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction.

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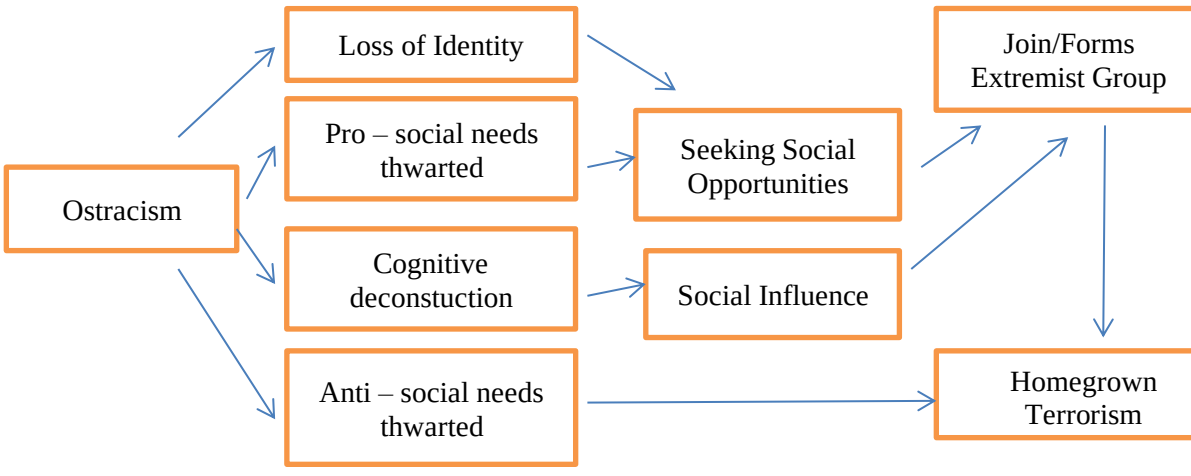
1. Introduction

1.1 Workplace Ostracism

Workplace ostracism is found to be a serious issue in the organizations. The impact of ostracism is ubiquitous, serious and severe and makes workers/employees feel excluded, ignored, rejected and produce negative outcomes in their performance. As Robinson and Schabram, (2017) noted, since 1970's ostracism has been present in the organizational literature. Ostracism is defined as being rejected, excluded or ignored by individuals or groups in the organizations, and being treated as invisible, denying and deceptive or unseen individual's existence in the workplace (Williams, 2007). The terms such as exclusion, ignored, social rejection and workplace ostracism are interrelated in nature. An individual has to face distress as his/ her social needs get negative impact when they are being ostracized from the groups once they belong to and this gets into sadness and anger. Ostracism is a pathetic, aversive and painful experience for anyone in the organization. Being excluded as individual or from groups, it generates severe immediate and everlasting and eternal negative consequences. (Wilk and Bien, 2018)

1.2 **Stages of Ostracism**



Source: Williams (1997,2001) proposed a model.

1.3 **Ostracism**

Ostracism refers to the social phenomenon of ignoring, rejecting, and social exclusion of individuals. But at the same time, social exclusion is different from ostracism as it generally requires a lack of attention. Ostracism majorly deals and involves giving less attention to others as individuals or in groups.

1.4 **Ostracism at workplace**

Workplace ostracism is when a person or a group of people are cast out, banished, dismissed, or excluded by a group once they belonged to. It includes being barred and ignored by other employees in the workplace. The purpose can be professional or personal, and sometimes a fellow employee may be ostracized due to the threat to him/her position, it can be in a form of revenge.

1.5 **Employee Performance**

Employee performance can be defined as how an employee does their job duties and responsibilities and executes the given job. It refers to the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality output of their work done. The performance also defines the value of the employees in the organization if they are not excluded or ostracized.

2. Literature Review

2.1 **Workplace Ostracism**

Ostracism occurs when an individual is ignored, disregarded, overlooked, neglected, excluded by other members of a group, society or organization, according to Williams (1997; 2009). Although ostracism occurs in each and every organization and recently its occurrence gained attention in organizational settings (Hitlan et al., 2006). Therefore, workplace ostracism can be defined as the elimination of socially predicted behaviour and neglecting viewpoint by individuals or groups focused toward other groups of individuals in the organizations. (Robinson et al., 2013).

Furthermore, Ostracism also threats three other needs and these are, existence, self-esteem, and control (Williams, 1997). Ostracism also elicit and invoke negative emotions and these emotions include hurt (Leary et al., 1998), sadness (Buckley, Winkel, & Leary, 2004), fearfulness (Chow, Tiedens, &Govan, 2008; Zadro, Williams, & Richardson, 2004), anxiety and emotional disturbance (Ferris et al., 2008), job satisfaction (Hitlan et al., 2006).

Ostracism is a powerful sociological phenomenon but it is negative, (Williams & Nida, 2011). It is also more dangerous than harassment (Robinson&O'Reilly,2012). At the workplace, ostracism causes a decrease in employee performance and increasing turnover. These effects in the long run not only adversely affect the organization's performance but also tarnishes its image in the workforce market (Chung & Yang, 2017).

Ostracism also creates concerns for 'excused negligent behavior' which is an exploitative weakness in the organization (Javed, Shah & Bashir, 2018).

Workplace Ostracism not only affects the individual's professional life but also his or her personal life. An employee facing ostracism in the workplace will take this at home (Liu et al., 2013). Similarly, Ferris et al., 2008) discovered that belongingness, control, confidence, and significant presence were all inversely related to the isolation of a person from its group.

2.2 **Employee Performance**

Employee performance and Organizational Performance are two different measures of performance in organizations (Otley, 1999). According to (Hunter 1986) organizational performance depends upon individual employee performance and other dependent variables of the organization either internal or external. But latter employee performance is being measured.

Employees perform better in their jobs if they are entrusted with responsibility and trust, they will perform more than their prescribed duties in the job description. The reason behind this is that they feel recognized and empowered by their employer which is a better thing in today's scenario (Sharkie 2010). This belongingness towards work results in an increase in employee performance. Similarly, (Topper, 2007) reported attitude and performance of the supervisor have a significant effect on employee's performance.

Furthermore, organizations measure the employee's performance annually, bi-annual and quarterly which helps the organizations in tracking the organizational performance as a whole. Usually, quality, quantity, and timeliness of output, cooperativeness, and presence at work are included in measuring employee performance (Gungor, 2011).

Thus, employee performance is the outcome achieved by the organization over time. Therefore, organizations take care of their high-performing employees rather than low performers. They listen to them as the organizational performance depends on the individual employee of the organization (Javed, Shah, & Bashir 2018).

2.3 **Ostracism and Employee Performance**

Workplace Ostracism and Employee performance are interrelated to each other, thus Ostracism results in a communication gap and causes a delay in work within the organization. This information gap is a major cause of performance decrease and contributor towards other performance indicators such as Stress, Job Dissatisfaction, and employee turnover (Javed, Shah, & Bashir 2018).

2.4 **Ostracism and Employee Attitudes**

2.4.1 Employee engagement -

Employee engagement represents the level of zeal, dedication and enthusiasm an employee feels towards their job. Employee engagement can be crucial to a company's goodwill and image, it directly links with job satisfaction and motivating employees for their jobs. Engaged employees within the organizations are more likely to be high performers and more productive than other employees of that organization. Employee engagement is a crucial and critical topic for all the sectors/organization whether it is academic or non - academic. The first concept was presented in (1990) by William Kahn, when organization handle or operate their employees as per their duties and roles assigned to them which can lead them to do their best in every manner and they will contribute towards organization's success. Nowadays, organizations recognize that the engagement of employees in the organization can encourage more satisfaction in consumers and customers, high performance in external competition, it can also increase productivity in organization, retention of employees, and an organization will also gain a competitive advantage if its employees are engaged in the organizational work. (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002).

2.4.2 Job Satisfaction –

Job satisfaction can be explained as the level of employee's gratification they feel in their job. This exceeds their daily roles and duties to balance a level of satisfaction with their peer group members or managers in the hierarchy. Job Satisfaction also plays an important role when organizational policies are better and also impacts employee's personal and professional lives.

These are the six factors of job satisfaction.

1. Atmosphere in the team.
2. Work life balance.
3. Salary & working conditions.
4. Varying work.
5. Development opportunities.
6. Flexible working & autonomy.

2.4.3 Organizational Commitment –

Organizational commitment can be defined as the bond, relationship or connection workers/employees and employer/organization have with one another in the organizations. This is based on (I/O psychology) Industrial organizational psychology and defines the psychological attachment of an individual in the organization.

1. Affective Commitment – affection towards your job.
2. Continuance Commitment – fear of loss.
3. Normative Commitment – sense of responsibility to stay in the organization.

Meyer and Allen's (1997) measured organizational commitment using Organizational Commitment Scale, this scale evaluates commitment on the basis of three components stated above affective, continuance, and normative commitment. According to this scale of measurement it seems organizational commitment found to be positive related to job performance, work attitudes and behavior of employees within the organization, (Brett, Cron, & Slocum, 1995) and this also helps in employees' success in working environment (Aryee, Luk, & Stone, 1998) but it is also negatively related to tension in job, intent of employees to leave the job and and create more turnover in the organizations, (Houselid, & Day, 1991; Hochwarter, Perrewe, Ferris & Gercio, 1999; Somers, 1995).

2.5 **Ostracism and Working Environment**

Working environment/ workplace commitment can be defined as the level of eagerness or willingness of an employee he/she has for his/her job assigned to him/her at workplace. This states the person's feeling and responsibility he/she has towards vision, mission, goals and objectives of that organization. Working environment, organizational culture and personal feelings of employees all these factors affect turnover (Yang, Wan & Fu, 2012).

Organizational culture and working environment of organization causes workplace ostracism. Whereas, identification of organization is important

aspect and can also decrease turnover in organization. The employee's intention towards turnover who consider themselves as a part of the organization is less (Harris & Cameron, 2005; Cole & Brunch, 2006; De Coninck, 2011).

3. Description of Broad Area

3.1 **Antecedents of Workplace Ostracism**

An essential predictor of ostracism at workplace are organizational and individual factors, as identified in cross-sectional studies and theoretical thought (Robinson & Schabram, 2017).

People are distinct in one or other ways from social or behavioral norms are more insecure of being disregarded, excluded, overlooked, neglected and rejected. Individuals who are identified as representative of splinter groups are often distinguished and differentiated, for example, multi - bilingual, outsiders (Hitlan et al., 2006) African and Americans (Deitch et al., 2003), or mental disorder (Marret al., 2012)and individuals with ailment, visible impairment, physical disorder (Wynne &McAnaney, 2009) have reported being overlooked, excluded, neglected or rejected.

Workplace ostracism is related with organizational factors such as micro and macro-organization's features and taking into discussion, (Robinson and Schabram, 2017) emphasized on organizational diversity, change and culture concerning ostracism at workplace.

Besides, factors of organizational culture, like competition, can cause ostracism. In today's competitive environment, employees are focused on their work outcomes which may ignore and may not include other individual or group of individuals in organizations, either unexpectedly or unintentionally to have valuable assets. In addition, neglecting and ignoring colleagues can be descriptive and rational, particularly this has been approved by organizational culture. That is, rejecting and ignoring others at workplace can be permitted or

accepted by superiors, and then imitated and accepted by other co-workers also. There are organizations where ignoring, neglecting, excluding, rejecting one another may be a routine task; then, many behaviors are not included as ostracism (Robinson & Schabram, 2017).

Organizational diversity may lead to workplace ostracism. As employees may be different (such as speaking various languages, and they are from various countries, having different expectations, behaviour and ethics) feel neglected or ignored (Jackson et al.,2006; Kistner et al.,1993).

3.2 **Impact or Consequences of Workplace Ostracism**

Consequences of workplace ostracism and its negative impact can be noticed easily in the organizations at all the levels it may be on individual, group or organizational level. An individual in the organization suffering from ostracism may suffers from psychological, physical well-being, and hurt feelings, and also deteriorate work outcomes and causes negative behavioral replies and acknowledgement within the work environment. According to the (Williams2009), ostracism in workplace environment, leads to frustration of basic requirement and needs, negative emotions. Rejected, excluded, or neglected working professionals have experienced a unfavourable mood (Ferris et al.,2008;Gamian-Wilketal., unpublished data), anger, upset and uncomfortable (Williams et al., 2000a), anxiety (Ferris et al., 2008; Williams et al., 2000a; Xu, 2012), emotional depletion (Wu et al., 2012). Ostracism in organizations may leads to threats for needs and requirements (Ferris et al.,2008; Gamian-Wilk et al., unpublished data), deplete and decline sense of belongingness (O'Reilly et al.,2015), and reduction in self-esteem (Sommer, Williams, Ciarocco ,&Baumeister, 2001).

Research Gaps

According to the critical review of literature, the following gaps are identified: -

1. On the basis of above existing literature, it shows that people in the organizations are not aware of consequences and negativity created due to ostracism and its impact on employee's performance and employee engagement.
2. The existing literature shows that research has been done on the concept of variables and indicators but actual antecedents can find out in the organizations.
3. Existing literature shows research can be focused not only on targeted employees but on observers and sources of ostracism, additionally to its negative effects on organization as a whole.

Research Questions

Following research questions are identified: -

1. To what extent workplace ostracism is prevalent in organizations?
2. What are antecedents of workplace ostracism in the organizations?
3. How does it affect the working environment of organizations?
4. To what extent workplace ostracism impacts employees psychologically?

4. Objectives

1. To study the workplace ostracism and its antecedents in organizations.
2. To examine the workplace ostracism and its impacts on job attitude of employees.
3. To analyze the workplace ostracism and its effects on employee's job performance.

4. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

The main purpose of the research design is to provide a framework for relevant evidence to carry out the research. This research will be descriptive as it aims to understand workplace ostracism and its impact on the performance of employees. It also aims to explore the psychological factors that determine the ostracized employees in organizations and to recommend various policies and practices to reduce workplace ostracism and create a healthy environment.

5.2 Hypothesis

H_{1A}: Gender is related to workplace ostracism in organization.

H_{2A}: Workplace ostracism has a significant impact on working environment of the organization.

4.2.1 Variables

The following are the variables discussed in the literature review. There are two types that are Dependent and Independent variables.

Dependent Variable

These are the variables which is to be measured and they depend on other variables. The dependent variable in this study is ‘Workplace Ostracism’.

Independent Variable

These are the variables whose value is independent over other variables and they are not depending on other variables. The independent variable in this study is ‘Employee Performance’, ‘Employee Attitude’, ‘Organizational Commitment’, ‘Employee Engagement’ and ‘Working Environment’.

5.3 Sample Design

The data will be collected from a sample size of 400 ostracized employees working in private colleges and MNC's in Delhi/NCT in India. Judgmental sampling technique based on work experience would be used to collect the data since for this study it is important to identify the employees which are fit for the study. The sample will comprise of respondents who have faced any form of ostracism at their workplace.

5.4 Data Collection Technique

The data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. The questionnaire will be framed to fetch information from employees working in various organizations. The secondary data will be collected from published reports, and online data published by national and international agencies newspapers which would help to gather information about various factors that influence workplace ostracism in any organization.

5.5 Data Analysis

The data would be analyzed using various quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. The quantitative data would be analyzed using various parametric and non – parametric tests depending on sample size and scaling technique.

5. Expected Outcome of the Research

The study will develop valid and reliable scales to measure the awareness among employees. And also determine workplace ostracism and its impact on Employees Performance.

After the study, the expected outcomes will be –

1. Level of awareness about workplace ostracism in the organization and its effects on employee attitudes, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employees' engagement and their performance.
2. Future Research can find out behavioral and cognitive coping strategies, and long-term effects of workplace ostracism and also examine the immediate response of ostracism at workplace.
3. To find out the empirical reasons for the workplace ostracism, and this aspect is crucial and creation of prevention programmes related to workplace ostracism in organization.
4. Research can be conducted on identifying and finding out the reasons and antecedents of workplace ostracism.

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